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FEATURES — NEWS

Helpers Among Us — Girl Scout leader keeps program active

JOYCE WESTNER | STAFF WRITER

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Winchester Girl Scouts with their troop master Elli Goeke on a trip to the Swiss Alps. COURTESY PHOTO/ELLI GOEKE

Lots of kids in Winchester join Scouting organizations and the w
runs the Girl Scout program in town is also the leader for the mid

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high school Scout troops.

Elli Goeke was a Girl Scout, including in your writer's senior troop, and she even earned a Gold Award, the equivalent of the Boy Scout's Eagle Award.

"For me," says Goeke, "Girl Scouts was a great way to be involved in the town and in outdoor events, and to try things I might not have a chance to do otherwise."

Winchester's Girl Scouts on a trip to New York City. COURTESY PHOTO/ELLI GOEKE

She volunteered at the library, too, which not only fulfilled the volunteer requirement, but also gave her the chance to see what other people were reading.

Today's older Scouts volunteer to collect items for the Woburn Council of Social Concern and Cradles to Crayons.

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"We also do outdoor trail maintenance," she says.

Goeke says a girls-only environment has been shown to teach girls leadership skills and selling cookies and candies gives them marketing skills.

"We've hiked to Appalachian Mountain Club huts, done tent camping, and taken great trips," she says.

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"Our Scouts sell home-baked goodies and coffee at Town Meeting," Goeke adds. "And we also sell the usual Girl Scout cookies, plus candies and magazines. We even sell Christmas wreaths, but only in West Medford so we're not competing with Winchester Boy Scouts."

They also have document shredding events in the St. Eulalia's parking lot, for which they hope for free-will donations. The next one will be on Saturday, May 4.

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Elli Goeke and her Girl Scout troop take a hiking trip in New Hampshire. COURTESY PHOTO/ELLI GOEKE

The bake sales bring in about $150 and the cookie sales bring in $1.05 per package. With that money, the girls have helped pay for trips to the Swiss Alps, and are planning to go to Iceland in 2025 and Costa Rica in 2026.

Thirty high-schoolers are in Goeke's troop, and there are troops for younger girls, either town-wide or at some elementary schools. With a chance to participate in every grade, the girls in Winchester can thank Goeke for making it possible.

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By Talia Ho | Correspondent Fame. Fortune. And all that jazz. This spring, Winchester High School presents "Chicago: Teen Edition," a bold musical that explores celebrity culture, media manipulation, and the cost of ambition. This iconic production

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The following was submitted by the Network for Social Justice: The Winchester community came together last week at the Griffin Museum of Photogr inaugural Black History and Celebration, an evening filled with music,

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Winchester residents share more snow photos

Well, Winchester, we made it through the weekend with only a coating of snow that amounted to nothing on Sunday afternoon. But during the Feb. 22-23 blizzard, Winchester News once again asked residents to send their snow photos. And here is what we received! Solmaz Amirnazmi said her daughters and

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Winchester Community Music School set to expand, upgrade

The big events in Winchester Community Music School always take place in Nichols Performance Hall. With the school and its performances' growing in popularity, the hall and many of its amenities are due for an upgrade. The performance hall is one of the main areas that the school seeks to

TAVISHI CHATTOPADHYAY | CORRESPONDENT

February 26, 2026

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Celebrate Women's History Month with Girls Leading Change

The following was submitted by the Network for Social Justice: To mark Women's History Month and International Women's Day in 2026, the Network for Social Justice is collaborating with club leaders from Winchester High School and members of the Community Health team from La Colaborativa in Chelsea and

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Winchester School Committee candidates bring contrasting backgrounds to Thursday forum

Two candidates for Winchester's School Committee will face voters at a forum as the district navigates a new literacy curriculum, budget pressures and questions about student mental health. Heather von Mering and John Bellaire are competing for an open seat on the School Committee, which oversees a budget von

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Friday, March 13, beginning at 7:30 p.m., live in-person and live streamed from the stunning Ripley Chapel at First Congregational Church, Winchester, 21 Church St., join in with Syldason, a duo concert featuring Sylvie Zakarian,

March 4, 2026

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